



# WESTERN CAUCUS NEWS

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## Western Caucus Leadership Elected for 109<sup>th</sup> Congress

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WASHINGTON, DC—The Western Caucus agreed unanimously to re-elect Congressman Chris Cannon (R-UT) as Chairman of the Congressional Western Caucus. Also elected to leadership positions in the Western Caucus are Congressman Jeff Flake (R-AZ) as Vice Chair, Congresswoman Marilyn Musgrave (R-CO) as Policy Chair, Congresswoman Barbara Cubin (R-WY) as Communications Chair, Congressman Rob Bishop (R-UT) as Secretary, and Congressman John Doolittle (R-CA) as Steering Committee Member.

“The Western Caucus plays a vital role in both protecting and promoting the interests of all westerners and I am anxious to build on the work we accomplished last Congress,” Cannon said. “From land management and grazing issues to energy development and water supply, the Federal Government and its policies have a very direct influence on the lives of all of us in the West. It is essential that we have a firm and effective voice in the formulation of those policies. The Western Caucus provides that voice, and I am honored to serve as its Chairman.”

Some possible national issues facing the Western Caucus during the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress include: strengthen and modernize the Endangered Species Act, enact a national energy policy to reduce our alliance on foreign energy sources, reform the Environmental Protection Agency and increase Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funding.

During the 108th Congress, the Western Caucus led the fight to withdraw the Bureau of Land Management’s wilderness manual, increase PILT funding, and to decrease additional federal land acquisition. The Caucus also successfully defeated over a dozen anti-western amendments, including attempts to prohibit snowmobiles in Yellowstone. The Western Caucus also played a key role in helping the House of Representatives pass a comprehensive energy bill and the Healthy Forests Initiative.

The Western Caucus is an organization of over fifty western Members of Congress that was established in 1992 by former Congressman Jim Hansen (R-UT). Congressman Cannon succeeds Congressman Richard Pombo (R-CA) as Chairman of the Caucus. Congressman Pombo is now the Chairman of the House Resources Committee.

*The Western Caucus is comprised of members of Congress committed to protecting the interests and ideals of the West. The mission of the Western Caucus is to focus on improving the quality of life in rural areas through policies that promote limited government, individual liberty, and economic opportunity.*